

progress. " Tippling, guzzling, and abusing all authorities is nowadays the mark of a right-minded peasant." " In taverns and betting-houses everything is now discussed by the common people." " The new gospel," says Erasmus, " is producing for us a new species of mankind—insolent, shameless, dare-devil sinners and liars, quarrellers, ne'er-do-wells, mischief makers, agitators, ranters, squallers, and brawlers." But then the timid Erasmus had very little of the militant reformer in him, and, like all the controversialists of the time, was inclined to call a man an agitator who asserted any opinion he did not like.

.Thus Luther's teaching might lead to theories whose application might produce startling effects. Luther was, in fact, soon called on to defend his doctrines, not only against his enemies but against his friends—against Carlstadt, for instance, who during his exile in the Wartburg had risen to be a power in Wittenberg. Carlstadt and his friend Zwilling finished by casting altars, images, pictures into the fire, abolishing the mass, distributing the wine as well as the bread to the people, and proclaiming a radical crusade in favour of simplicity of worship and life. Behind Carlstadt were the prophets of Zwickau, Storch and Stiibner, who had been driven from Zwickau as disturbers of the peace, and were busy expounding their revelations to the multitude. Men like Nicolas Storch, a weaver by occupation, with a taste for theological speculation, reminiscent of Mount Tabor, were far more aggressive and self-reliant than even Luther in their attack on tradition. They were the prophets of the Holy Ghost pure and simple, of a Bible which could only be explained by the unsophisticated, divinely inspired mind of the ecstatic weaver. They relied more on popular opinion and popular support than on learned theologians, established authorities; inveighed against schools and universities, and claimed for presumptuous ignorance a monopoly of divine wisdom. They carried away the impressionable Carlstadt, who, doctor of theology though he was, turned to the inspired weaver for light on recondite texts of Scripture. If Luther had not hurried from the Wartburg to preach moderation and common-sense, Wittenberg would have become a second Mount Tabor. The victory against these fanatic, intolerant